

## Commemorating the End of World War II in Bavaria 60 Years of Democracy and Freedom



Photo courtesy of The National Archives, Washington

*“Sixty years ago, the flags of freedom unfurled across Europe and Asia as victorious American and Allied troops brought World War II to an end. Freedom prevailed when millions were liberated from oppression and tyranny was replaced by democracy.”*

President George W. Bush, May 3, 2005

*“Many sons of America died for the freedom of Germany and of Europe. That remains unforgettable.”*

Bavarian Minister President Edmund Stoiber, May 1, 2005

## Liberation of Dachau Concentration Camp Commemorated



Sixty years after the liberation of Dachau Chargé d'Affaires John A. Cloud (left) from the U.S. Embassy Berlin and Munich U.S. Consul General Matthew M. Rooney (right) laid a wreath at the Dachau concentration camp memorial site on the occasion of the official liberation commemoration event on May 1, 2005. More than 1,500 survivors attended the ceremony, many of them for the very first time. Bavarian Minister President Edmund Stoiber thanked the U.S. troops and the American people: "Many sons of America died for the freedom of Germany and of Europe. That remains unforgotten." The Federal German government was represented by Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul.



Upon liberation over 67,000 prisoners were held in the Dachau concentration camp.



On April 29 1945, units from the US Army liberated the Dachau concentration camp.

Official Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site: <http://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/englisch/content/>

## Recollections - Remembrances - Reminiscences World War II Veterans Return to Munich



*"My father, then-Major A.L. Hugins, invaded Nazi Germany as a battalion commander with the 86th Infantry ("Black Hawk") Division in early March, 1945. His battalion fought across west-central Germany, down through Bavaria, and had crossed into Austria, near Salzburg, by V-E Day.*

*Twenty-one years later, Col. Hugins returned to West Germany to complete his last three-year assignment as an active duty Army officer. He quickly became an admirer of the nation he had fought in World War II, often telling his children how impressed he was by Germany's physical reconstruction but especially by its establishment of a strong, functioning democracy. He was particularly proud of America's role in supporting those developments.*

*In a fundamental way, post-war Germany's success, its reunification, and the fall of the Iron Curtain represent lasting Victory in Europe. I'm pretty certain my Dad, who greeted V-E Day in 1945 in Central Europe (and who died in 1992), would agree."*

Robert Hugins, former Public Affairs Officer in Munich, now Public Affairs Officer in Islamabad



Alan Lukens (right), a retired U.S. Ambassador, and his wife visited U.S. Consul General Matthew M. Rooney (left) at the U.S. Consulate General in Munich. Ambassador Lukens participated in ceremonies marking the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp. Sixty years ago, Lukens served in Combat Command B of the 20th Armored Division, 7th Army, as an artillery fire control operator. After the liberation of Dachau his unit moved on to Munich and then to Frasdorf where they celebrated the official end of the war with the local population and young French soldiers from the 2nd Armored Division.

*“On April 29, the 20th Armored Division, part of the 7th Army, was told to attack Munich. I was in Combat Command B, which included the 413th Armored Field Artillery, and Battery A, where I was a fire control operator, spotting artillery fire. It turned out that we were headed for Dachau, without any indication that there was a camp there. Our tanks smashed the defenses, with the infantry of the 42nd Division marching right behind the tanks. After the liberation of Dachau (another story) we headed for Munich.”*

For complete text of Alan Lukens’ and other veterans’ recollections, go to:  
<http://usinfo.state.gov/special/Archive/2005/May/02-861869.html>  
<http://www.saurusspress.com/travel/remembrance/rdvatrip.htm>



U.S. veterans of the 157th regiment of the 45th Infantry Division of the 7th Army at Bavarian Television studios on April 29 - the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp - look at their photos of the liberation of the concentration camp and their entry into war-torn Munich. Shown left on the picture are Jack Hallowell who serves as the group's historian, Carl Getzel (center), and Chan Rogers (right).



On 29 April 1945, 3rd Battalion of the 157th Infantry Regiment liberated the concentration camp at Dachau, and at the close of the day regimental units were in the outskirts of Munich. 30 April 1945 was the last day of combat for the regiment.

For detailed personal reminiscences and photos:  
[http://www.45thdivision.org/Content\\_Table.htm](http://www.45thdivision.org/Content_Table.htm)

## Liberation of Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Commemorated



U.S. Embassy Chargé d’Affaires John Cloud (left) and Munich U.S. Consul General Matthew M. Rooney (center) took part in the ceremony to commemorate the liberation of the concentration camp Flossenbürg by soldiers of the 90th U.S. Infantry Division on April 23, 1945. Dr. Jack Terry, (right) survivor of Flossenbürg concentration camp, is shown on the picture at the wreath-laying service. Renate Schmidt, Minister for Family, Youth and Senior Citizens represented the German federal government. Günther Beckstein, deputy Minister President, participated on behalf of the Bavarian government.

*“Sixty years ago, on April 23, 1945 at 10:50 a.m. the concentration camp in Flossenburg was liberated by soldiers of the 90th Infantry Division of the US Third Army. I was the youngest of the 1523 inmates remaining in the camp and I was still able to walk. The month before was my 15th birthday but I was unaware of the date. The 23rd of April, 1945 was also the saddest day of my life. As I stood on the outside of the gate of the camp a few meters from where we are now, I realized that I belonged nowhere, no one belonged to me, and I belonged to no one.”*

Dr. Jack Terry, survivor of Flossenbürg concentration camp

Full text of speech by Dr. Jack Terry :  
<http://germany.usembassy.gov/germany/flossenbuerg.html>

Official site of concentration camp Flossenbürg :  
<http://www.gedenkstaette-flossenbuerg.de/>

## End of World War II - in Nuremberg



Consul General Matthew M. Rooney (right) and Prof. Jutta Limbach, (second from right) president of Goethe Institute and former German Chief Justice, were guests of honor and speakers at the City of Nuremberg's official commemoration of the end of WW II on April 20, 2005. In his remarks at Nuremberg's historic city hall, Consul General Rooney urged the Nuremberg citizenry to be mindful now and in the future of a history that allowed enemies to become friends and of a transatlantic partnership that allowed Europe to again become whole and free. Far left on the picture is Mrs. Dianna Rooney, second from left is Nuremberg's Lord Mayor Dr. Ulrich Maly.

Special websites on the end of World War II in Nuremberg:



<http://www.kriegsende.nuernberg.de/>

<http://www.kubiss.de/scripts/vk/vksuch.asp?WasDenn=Gedenktage&ZielGr=3&kosten=alle>

## End of World War II - in Augsburg

The official end of World War II commemoration event of the Augsburg City Council took place in the Goldener Saal in Augsburg on April 28. Speakers were: U.S. Consul General Matthew M. Rooney, Lord Mayor Paul Wengert and Professor Ferdinand Kramer, University of Munich.

Augsburg is celebrating "60 years of Freedom" with a series of events:

<http://home.satx.rr.com/jvolstad/augsburg.htm>

[http://www.augsburger-allgemeine.de/Home/Specials/60JahreKriegsende/sptnid,1861\\_regid,2.html](http://www.augsburger-allgemeine.de/Home/Specials/60JahreKriegsende/sptnid,1861_regid,2.html)

## US Holocaust Special Envoy Ambassador Edward B. O'Donnell Visits Bavaria



Ambassador Edward B. O'Donnell visited the concentration camp site Flossenbürg in Northern Bavaria on May 3, 2005. He discussed with memorial site director Jörg Skriebeleit (right) the camp's development as a central-European memorial and his own work in combating Anti-Semitism and intolerance with staff and local media.

Ambassador Edward B. O'Donnell (second from left) at Germany's oldest Jewish community in Regensburg. Also shown on the picture are Rabbi Dannyel Morag (left), board member Hans Rosengold (center), chairman Otto Schwerdt (second from right) and board member Michael Russakovski.



Photo by Uwe Moosburger



Hans Rosengold (right) shows Ambassador Edward O'Donnell exhibit panels. As early as October 15, 1945, the newspaper of the U.S. military government reported the foundation of the "Jewish community" in Regensburg.

Photo by Uwe Moosburger



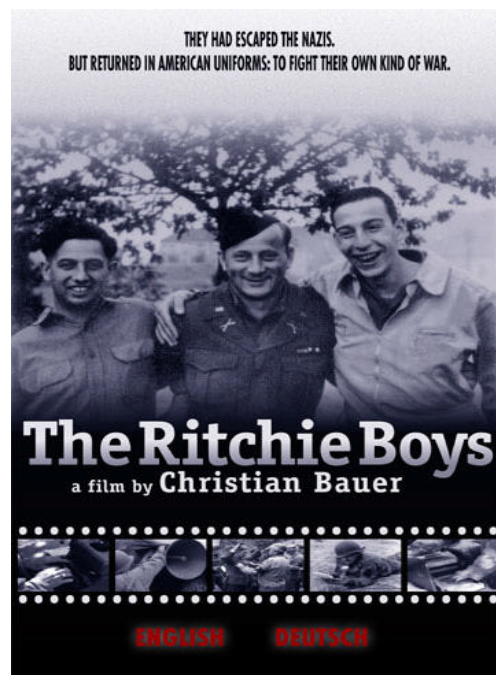
## The Ritchie Boys

### Escape from Nazi Germany - Return in US Uniforms



*The Ritchie Boys* is the heroic story of a group of young men who fled Nazi Germany, were then trained in intelligence warfare in Camp Ritchie, Maryland, and returned to Europe in US-uniforms to help the Allied war effort against Hitler's Third Reich. Guy Stern (right) was one of them.

In a preview showing on May 3 before the official premiere at the International Munich documentary film festival Stern and director Christian Bauer (left) commented on some parts of the film, which has been on the shortlist for the 2005 Academy Awards.



## An Eye-Witness Story From Munich

*"Thinking back to the date (May 8, 1945) I remember most that we were relieved when word came that "the Americans are here!" We learned mostly via rumors as the radio station was not working; plus, Munich took the biggest hits just in March and April and everything was chaotic. My mother dismantled the beds she earlier had made in the attic for my sister and me, fearing the Russians would get here first. The Russians were close to the Bavarian Forest where the Ost-zone came into being, and all Bavaria feared they would occupy us. The tales of their cruelty had reached us via the refugees who filled Munich then, plus from the soldiers that had escaped from their camps.*

*We stayed locked up these first days and I could not go to my job as "Zahnaerztliche Helferin" (dental assistant) in Solln where I worked for Dr. Maderer after passing the dental assistance course.*

*Anyhow, Muenchner were mostly glad (unless they had to fear being named as Nazis) for the Americans occupying us and trying to make order. I remember tales of looting, not by Amis but by the poles and Russians released from the POW and Forced Labor camps.*

*My Dad had gone "hamstern," that is, he traded Mom's last good linens and silverware at nearby farms for potatoes, cabbage, and maybe some baconfat as we knew there would be no more "Lebensmittelmarken" to buy groceries. The black market flourished until order was restored.*

*We considered the Americans more as liberators than occupiers, hearing tales of them distributing candy to kids. I was almost 20, we stayed mostly locked at home. I remember my Mom getting cigarettes, for trading, from some of the foreign workers who had been assigned to work at the sawmill on Perlacher Weg and to whom she had once in a while brought produce from the vegetable garden she had planted next to where we lived. She even raised rabbits there for eating on holidays although I rather only had the potatoes as we kids had given the rabbits names and fed them "Lowenzahn" (dandelions.)*

*Soon radio was operating by the Americans, schools reopened and then, of course, the Marshall Plan saved us all.*

*I remember hearing of friends with relatives in USA getting Care Packages. Once, Mom got a can of pineapples from a neighbor and we saved the can a long time just to smell it! Then the new marks came - I think it was 60 Marks each family member could exchange at first. Times were rough but at least no more bombs!*

*My Dad, who never joined the (Nazi) party, was happy to re-open the realty office at Sendlinger Tor again with his two partners. He also bought a new car. Sadly, he died in May 1946, just as life began to get orderly and good again. He was in an accident, trying to avoid a streetcar (alone in the car.) His broken bones and ribs were just healing after three weeks in the hospital when he contracted pneumonia. The doctors said if we could just get some penicillin from the Americans, it was rumored to be a miracle drug. How often I wished later if only I met my husband that year already!"*

*Erna M. Guy (Erna Filser then)*

Erna Guy is the mother of Patricia Guy who is presently Consul for Public Affairs at the U.S. Consulate General in Munich.

For more documents on End of World War II Commemoration go to:  
[http://usinfo.state.gov/special/ve\\_day.html](http://usinfo.state.gov/special/ve_day.html)